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ABSTRACT

Five basic discussions on post secondary education of American Indian students are presented in this paper. These are: (1) Are Indian studies programs in non-Indian colleges and universities providing quality education for Indian students? (2) Are Indian community colleges on the reservations and in the Indian communities providing a viable alternative to a quality education? (3) Where does the primary authority rest for Indian post secondary education--in the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) or in the Office of Education under Health, Education, and Welfare (OE--HEW)? (4) Indian students lose out financially and programmatically in minority studies programs when they compete with Black and Chicano students; and (5) There must be further office and agency (BIA-Interior and OE-HEW) agreements on higher education function and entitlements. Four general recommendations are presented, e.g., there should be at least 1 national Indian university with appropriate graduate schools in conjunction with the proposed Research Institute. Specific recommendations are made for Indian studies in non-Indian colleges and universities, and community colleges on the reservations. Also included are 5 statistical appendixes. (FF)

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HIGHER EDUCATION

Background and Implications for American Indians

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HIGHER EDUCATION AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR AMERICAN INDIANS

I. Historical Background

Since 1930 the states have assumed increased responsibility for Indian education aided by the provision of federal funds. The Indian people fear that the federal government may withdraw entirely from its special relationship to Indians. This fear continues to have a dominant influence on Indian reaction to changes in the extent, nature, and administration of federal programs.

In November, 1966, two meetings were held in Denver, Colorado, to discuss where responsibility for Indian education should be located within the Federal government. Attending the first meeting were 18 tribal chairmen and members of tribal education committees. Attending the second meeting were college and university faculty who have conducted research on Indian problems and teachers of Indian children. Indians expressed concern about the transfer of education for BIA to the Office of Education. They were generally opposed to the disruption of the traditional relationships and distrustful of the fragmentation of Indian services within the Federal Government.

Participants in the second meeting felt that educational programs should recognize the different problems of Indians in Federal and public schools and should consider the readiness of local or state systems to provide educational services.

The concensus at both meetings was that the BIA should be given time to carry out its new educational program before serious consideration would be given to a transfer of the educational function from one agency to another.

A report prepared for the Subcommittee on Education of the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare called Quality Education for American Indians: A Report on Organizational Location, during the 1967 hearings on amendments to Public Law 89-10, the ESEA of 1965 made several recommendations. The report recommended that the BIA should retain the education function, working in close cooperation with the Office of Education. It suggested that the Office of Education should review its programs to determine how to make these available to the greatest extent possible for the benefit of Indian children enrolled in federally-operated schools. It recommended that education must be viewed as a single continuing process which ranges from preschool through adulthood. It stated that consideration should be given to supporting a center for graduate study of the languages, history and culture of American Indians. The concept of Indian control and increased responsibility for education by Indian parents and tribal leaders was supported and recommended.

It was also recommended that ways should be explored to encourage development of junior or community colleges on or near the larger reservations to facilitate opportunities for larger numbers of Indian children to receive higher education.

When Dillon S. Meyer became Commissioner of Indian Affairs in May 1950, the BIA began a new epoch. As part of a great change in the basic organization of the Bureau, there was a further delegation of authority to area directors and an increase in their authority over superintendents.

Commissioner Dillon Meyer stated that "the federal off-reservation education of Navajos is directed entirely toward the preparation of these children for permanent off-reservation employment. Indians are being provided...with

adequate training programs to fit them for employment in skilled occupations off the reservations."

In 1955, the BIA launched a pilot program in adult education designed to make five tribal groups literate in English and it supported legislation for a program of vocational training. Yet, at the same time it has eliminated or curtailed many activities which seem to involve vocational training. Arts and crafts projects have been shut down or left to shift for themselves. Bureau guidance and support have been stopped for the Qualla Cooperative at Cherokee, North Carolina; the Sequoyah weaving project in Oklahoma; and the pottery and weaving project at Pine Ridge, South Dakota.

II. American Indian Studies and Community Colleges

American Indians perceive education as a continuing process. Under optimum conditions, all parts of education should interrelate as the family and community interrelate. Education, from Head Start through elementary, secondary and college levels, to adult and continuing education, is viewed as an interrelated instrument of social integration and mobility.

Under optimum conditions, elders and community leaders would help college students from their tribes to prepare for the ultimate community service by defining group needs. College students would tutor and provide role models for secondary students. College students and secondary students would provide tutorial and assume teacher aides' roles in primary schools. Parents, family and other adults would be involved in support roles at the preschool and Head Start programs and would be supportive in community college programs. As involvement increases, commitment increases.

Perhaps the most immediate, pressing problem in the area of Indian education today is how to correct and reverse the discouraging history of failure in Indian post secondary education. The attrition rate for Indian students during their first year of college stands at an astonishing 74 percent. This figure points to a complete lack of success on the part of the nation's colleges in their educational programs for American Indians. Perhaps these Indian student push-outs are the symbolic miner's canary of the nation's educational system. The lack of financial support, the inadequate counseling and guidance programs, and the irrelevant curricula are due in part to a long-standing policy of coercive acculturation. The goals of American higher education to a very large degree are out of tune and in conflict with the Indian's psychological and philosophical frame of reference.

Post secondary education for American Indians in the United States is education for displaced persons. That educational system is still a system devised for people that are non-Indian and that ascribe to the imported values and modes of behavior of European peoples. It is audacious to assume that this kind of majority education based on Judeo-Christian values will work for peoples of different value systems. It is audacious to assume that non-Judeo-Christian peoples should accept it or try to modify themselves to accomodate it.

There may be post secondary education at Black colleges for Black students, taught and administered by Black people, but it is essentially the same kind of educational system that serves the dominant society. There may be post secondary education at American Indian community colleges for Indian students taught by Indian people, but even though some educational breakthroughs have been made, there is a pervading domination of accreditation by non-Indians who refuse to

allow much variance in the sacrosanct European-imported educational system. Doesn't Indian post secondary education at established and traditional colleges and universities usually mean that we are allowed some American Indian counselors to encourage us to hang in there so that we can compete with one another and with the majority society? Doesn't it mean that we are talent searched, upward bounded and financial aided to learn to internalize and assimilate the "American" values of mercantilism, individualism and acquisitiveness?

What does "innovative" mean in relation to minority post secondary education? Should a whole new and different style of education be developed for those minority people who have been denied access but who aspire to traditional outcomes? Perhaps the need here is only for a wider door, and not for inconceivable new worlds of education.

Fundamental institutional changes have not been made. Institutions have only minutely expanded. A few Indian couselors and tutors have been hired. There has been some frantic activity to hire a few token Indian faculty members and to establish "Indian" programs by luring "scholastically qualified" students to the campus so that compliance in Affirmative Action Programs can be documented. As a result, we have fragmented Indian programs across the nation with our few Indian faculty and students fighting lonely battles against the near-impenetrable walls of majority educational systems.

The creative ferment now apparent in post secondary education for American Indians may be the bravest step toward the inconceivable new world of education. American Indians can truly teach our guests on this continent ways of survival if we are to be allowed that opportunity.

This creative ferment that caused change in the Indian post secondary education world occurred almost simultaneously in Alaska, Montana, Arizona, California, South Dakota, North Dakota, Wyoming, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Idaho, Minnesota, and Washington, D.C. Mini-repercussions have awakened tribes in neighboring areas.

In October of 1972, the Planning Resources in Minority Education Program of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, in cooperation with the Office of American Indian Affairs of the U.S. Office of Education, convened the directors and presidents of the boards of regents of Indian community colleges in order to form a consortium.

Two months later at the Phoenix, Arizona, office of the Navajo Community College, mutual agreements were made to form the American Indian Higher Education Consortium. Member institutions are: Turtle Mountain Community College on the Turtle Mountain Reservation in North Dakota; Standing Rock Community College on the Standing Rock Reservation that borders North and South Dakota; Lakota Higher Education Center on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota; Sinte Gleska College on the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota; Haskell Indian Junior College near Lawrence, Kansas; the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico; the Southwest Indian Polytechnic Institute in Albuquerque, New Mexico; the Navajo Community College on the Navajo Reservation in Arizona that also borders three other states; and the Hehaka Sapa College at D-Q University near Davis, California. Kuskokwim Community College at Bethel, Alaska, is considering membership. This momentum may soon include the Bannock and Shoshone of the Fort Hall Reservation in Idaho, the Arapaho and Shoshone of the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming, the Sisseton-Wahpeton in South Dakota, the Northern Chey-

enne in Montana, and the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation in Oregon.

The Consortium colleges are unique in that they are governed by American Indian boards of regents, that they are served by predominantly American Indian administrators and faculty, and the student bodies are predominantly American Indian. They strive to meet the post secondary educational needs of the tribal-specific reservation people. They reinforce tribal-specific value systems in their educational modalities. They are thwarted only to the extent that non-Indian accreditation systems enforce non-Indian educational prerequisites upon them. This latter reality may be why the Consortium members' first priority is to formulate an accrediation system that will be true Indian education accreditation by peer decision. There is no doubt that there will be violent resistance. Indian people concerned with Indian education for Indians are ready to fight that battle.

This is positive thrust by the tribes to reinforce their unique cultural traditions that can be utilized by Indian students to prepare them for productive contemporary life. These kinds of developing on-reservation or near-reservation postsecondary educational facilities will increase. It can be expected that there will be at least three new such institutions developed each year in the forseeable future.

The member institutions differ in several ways--they are in different geographical areas, they are complex linguistically and speak different languages, they are tribal-specific, they are multi-tribal, some are on reservations, some are off reservations--in varying stages of dependence and autonomy. As such, their needs and expectations differ within the Consortium, but the ultimate goal

of each is the same: the strengthening of their own and all other post secondary Indian educational programs.

The Consortium goals are to establish the following:

1. An American Indian higher education accreditation agency;
2. A financial and institutional resources office;
3. A human resources development program;
4. An American Indian education data bank; and
5. An American Indian curriculum development program.

There is yet a new battle on the horizon. During the past few years, some Indian people have been planning for a National American Indian University and Research Institute. There is a cavernous gap after the two-year Indian community colleges. The tribes, as sovereign nations, have particular educational needs that are not now being met by the hundreds of colleges and universities in the United States. Research for and about Indians is being done to and on Indians, but not by Indians. The many Indian people that are planning tribal higher education have formulated some specific recommendations to present to the tribes:

1. The National American Indian University and Research Institute should be designed by American Indian architects and it should be located near a sacred place; and
2. Undergraduate and graduate curriculum should be designed by Indian educators and respected persons.

The Research Institute will relate to the following issues of American Indian survival: federal and state legislation endangering tribal sovereignty; federal legislation endangering tribal resources, including land and water rights; civil rights legislation and its adverse effect on American Indian

people; state, federal and foundation monies being spent and misspent on American Indian education; Indians in penal institutions; Indian in mental hospitals (that are there because they are diagnosed by proponents of foreign psychological systems); the 4,000 to 6,000 Indian children in non-Indian foster homes; American Indian bio-medical research; economic development research for the several hundred reservations, villages, rancherias and Indian communities; and the treaty responsibilities of the United States Government, its states and its departments, offices and agencies to the tribes.

III. Discussion of Issues

The basic questions are:

1. Are Indian studies programs in non-Indian colleges and universities providing quality education for American Indian students?
2. Are Indian community colleges on the reservations and in the Indian communities providing a viable alternative to a quality education?
3. Where does the primary authority rest for Indian post secondary education--in the BIA or in the Office of Education? (Some tribes in the states of Alaska, Oklahoma, California, and eastern states may want to relate directly to the state departments of education. Other tribes in such states as Arizona, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, and Montana may want to relate exclusively to the BIA but with some affiliation to OE programs.) There must be tribal and regional agreement on relationships.
4. American Indian students lose out financially and programmatically in minority studies programs when they compete with Black and Chi-

cano students. Indian students are usually outnumbered by other minority students and usually do not make demands in the same manner as other minorities.

5. There must be further office and agency (BIA-Interior and OE-HEW) agreements on higher education function and entitlements.

IV. Recommendations

General Recommendations:

1. There should be at least one national Indian university with appropriate graduate schools in conjunction with the Research Institute.

2. Teacher training should take place at the nine selected regional non-Indian universities and at Indian community colleges as determined by the diverse tribal needs.

3. Vocational and educational needs should be met at the Indian reservation community colleges and the nine selected regional non-Indian universities.

4. Financial aids needs of Indian students should be met by education appropriation from the Congress through the BIA, based on demographic projection. It must be established through the Indian Attorneys Association, who are Indian law and treaty specialists, that education is a basic right of Indians and not a privilege as is now interpreted.

Indian Studies in Non-Indian Colleges and Universities

1. The National Tribal Chairmen's Association, the National Indian Education Association, and the National Advisory Council on Indian Education (if formed) must determine where federal dollars should go. These monies (for instance, Fund

for the Improvement of Post Secondary Education, Title III, Title IV-D, EPDA, NIES, etc.) should be placed based on the following criteria:

A. The departments and capabilities;

B. Indian tribal involvement and support;

C. Curricula geared to Indian and community needs;

D. Indian faculty and guidance counselors;

E. Financial support and commitment; and

F. High Indian population impact.

Possibly nine areas should be selected as follows: (a) Great Lakes, (b) Central Plains, (c) Northeast, (d) Southeast, (e) South, (f) Southwest, (g) Rocky Mountain, (h) West Coast, and (i) Alaska.

2. Proliferation of Indian programs should be controlled and/or curtailed. Proliferation results in the ineffective dispersal of the few Indian administrators, faculty, and guidance counselors. Continued proliferation should begin at a new undetermined date when reservations' post secondary needs have been met by graduating Indian personnel that would be serving either at the nine selected non-Indian colleges and universities or at the various reservation post secondary education centers.

Community Colleges on the Reservations

1. Congress must appropriate comprehensive annual funding for post secondary learning centers on the reservation for basic support, including operating costs, administration, faculty and building costs as determined by the specific tribes.

2. Initial congressional appropriations must support existing post secon-

dary education, learning centers, or community colleges such as: Kuskokwim Community College, Lakota Higher Education Center, Sinte Gleska, Turtle Mountain Community College, Standing Rock Community College, and Navajo Community College.

3. Succeeding appropriations would support other developing community colleges on reservations that are projected at the rate of five per annum. Reservations now in developmental stages are: Bannock-Shoshone at Fort Hall, Idaho; Arapaho-Shoshone at Twin River, Wyoming; Northern Cheyenne at Lame Deer, Montana; and the Confederated Tribes at Warm Springs, Oregon.

Rationale

Individual tribes have different post secondary educational goals. The alternative educational modes are required in order to increase enrollment retention and attainments that will meet tribal short and long-range goals. Congress has recognized the educational need to put community colleges on the reservations and has established precedent by appropriating $5 million for the establishment of Navajo Community College.

APPENDIX A

MINORITY UNDER-REPRESENTATION

The degree of under-representation of each of the four minority groups may be determined by computing the relationship between each minority's estimated enrollment and its estimated total population. The ratios (expressed as percentages) are as follows:

	Percent of Population Enrolled
Black	2.0%
Mexican Americans	1.0%
Puerto Ricans	1.3%
American Indians	0.6%
All Minorities	1.8%
Non-Minorities	4.3%
Total Population	3.9%

In order to achieve proportional representation, the enrollment of minorities would have to be increased to the point where their ratios were the same as that given for "non-minorities" (4.3%). To reach that goal immediately:

the estimated Black enrollment in 1970 would have to be increased 543,000 (from 470,000 to 1,013,000)--an increase of 116 percent;

the estimated Mexican American enrollment in 1970 would have to be increased by 165,000 (from 50,000 to 215,000)--an increase of 330 percent;

the estimated Puerto Rican enrollment in 1970 would have to be increased by 45,000 (from 20,000 to 65,000)--an increase of 225 percent; and

the estimated American Indian enrollment in 1970 would have to be increased by 26,000 (from 4,000 to 30,000)--an increase of 650 percent.

Data Source: Minority Access to College, Fred E. Crossland. (A Ford Foundation Report; Schocken Books, N.Y., 1971)

APPENDIX B

Post Secondary Indian Education
Statistical Information

BIA Financial Assistance, 1972-73

In December of 1972, a $2.5 million supplemental appropriation for the BIA made it possible for an additional 3,000 Indian youths to receive scholarship grants to begin or continue their education at the college level. 11,000 students are receiving higher education assistance under the BIA's regular appropriation.

Approximately 14,000 applications for scholarship grants were received in the summer of 1972.

The 14,000 students now receiving assistance is almost 20 times the number receiving assistance ten years ago and about five times the number assisted four years ago. More than 100 students receiving assistance are in law school and approximately 100 more are in other post graduate programs.

The total monies provided through the BIA for higher education is $20.9 million for the fiscal year 1973.

APPENDIX C

Federally recognized tribes	478
State recognized tribes	17
Tribal entities recognized by state or federal government	52
TOTAL	547

B.I.A. Indian Scholarship Fund for FY '73: $20,956,000

Request FY '74: $19,938,000

13,500 students have B.I.A. scholarships.

Data Source: Secretary of Interior Morton Reports on Indian Matters. Press Release, March, 1973.

APPENDIX D

In 1957, an estimated two thousand Indian students were in colleges and other post secondary institutions. This number had increased to about ten thousand in 1970.

It is estimated that about three thousand Indian high school graduates entered college in 1970 and that about one-fourth of this number will graduate from a four year course. This indicates that approximately 18% of an age cohort are entering college, compared with about 40% of the age group of all American youth; and that 4% are graduating from a four year course compared with about 22% of the total American age cohort.

Among post secondary students, 42% are attending colleges and taking academic courses, while the other 58% are taking vocational-technical courses which require from one to three years of training.

The ratio of men to women among post secondary students is approximately 55 to 45.

Data Source: To Live on this Earth. Fuchs and Havinghurst. Doubleday, 1972.

APPENDIX E

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS PROJECTIONS

	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74
Number of students funded	6,623	10,000	14,000
Adult vocational grants	907	14,000	1,150-1,957
Dropouts	953	1,521	1,974
Graduates	345	551	600
Total Expenditures	$6,098,000	$15,248,000	$16,148,000